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LETTER DATED 1 FEBRUARY 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF BURUNDI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF
SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement by His Excellency Mr. Pierre Buyoya, President of the Republic of Burundi, on 23 January 1999, following the summit of Heads of State of the region which decided to lift the economic sanctions imposed on Burundi since 31 July 1996.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gamaliel NDARUZANIYE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex

Statement by His Excellency Mr. Pierre Buyoya, President of the Republic of Burundi, on 23 January 1999, on his return from Arusha following the regional summit on Burundi which lifted the sanctions imposed by the region since 31 July 1996

At the close of the summit on Burundi which has just taken place in Arusha, the Heads of State and Government who, on 31 July 1996, decided to impose economic sanctions on our country have now decided to lift them.

We rejoice at this decision and we invite the people of Burundi to welcome this happy event and to rejoice.

Since 31 July 1996, the people of Burundi have endured many difficulties and many hardships due to a lack of understanding of its choices. This difficult situation resulted in many sacrifices on every level, but the people of Burundi accepted them with great dignity, great courage and a profound sense of responsibility.

I take this opportunity to congratulate them very sincerely and invite them to bear in mind that a nation's destiny is a function of the efforts that its sons and daughters put into it.

I invite the people of Burundi to remain always proud and upright, to build a peaceful and prosperous nation, to work hard so that production in all sectors of national life may expand greatly so as to meet all basic needs.

As for us, our course remains unchanged. We reaffirm our commitment to ensure security for all, to pursue the peace process on both fronts, internal and external, to promote human rights and development and to rehabilitate the victims of the war.

I ask all Burundians to consider that peace is a treasure to be safeguarded, and that nothing in the world can justify genocide, massacres or exile when the door to dialogue is open.

We are and we remain convinced that genuine peace and prosperity will be the work of the Burundians themselves; no one has a right to escape that task, at the risk of betraying his compatriots.

We thank the friends of Burundi, the countries of the subregion and the international community as a whole, for their contribution to the positive development which has culminated today in the ending of our country's political and economic isolation so that the environment may, at last, be conducive to our peace programme.

We hope that all our partners will remain by our side on this path and that they will support our efforts to revive the economy and to rebuild the nation. We hope that they will do more, for peacemaking also requires improving the living conditions of the people who are the beneficiaries of that peace.

We have just entered a new phase. The people of Burundi must know this; they must know that no more time must be lost in so senseless and futile a conflict and that the time has come for political realism and collective responsibility so that Burundi may become a land of milk and honey, where each citizen has the capacity to realize his or her potential in complete freedom and justice.
